

When I was raising my family and attending law school, I also worked as a U.S. Capitol Police Officer. Today, I still feel a special bond with those who protect our communities. I have worked to provide more resources for our law enforcement community, meet the greater demands of homeland security since September 11, 2001, protect an officer's right to carry firearms, fight the drug war domestically as well as internationally, and protect our children from abduction.

Providing the Resources Law Enforcement Needs

Public safety is the most important job of any government. That's why securing adequate funds to fight crime in Nevada and to protect our nation from terrorist attacks is one of my top priorities.

The law enforcement community should be proud that crime dropped across the nation in the 1990s, in part because of programs like Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), which gave local law enforcement agencies the resources to put more cops on the streets. Today the Administration is trying to slash the resources that are needed to keep crime on the run. The Administration's proposed FY05 Budget would cut COPS and merge it with two other programs: the Local Law Enforcement Block Grants and the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (Byrne Grants). This reorganization would cut total funding by \$1 billion.

Slashing \$1 billion from local law enforcement won't make our communities safer. Nevada officers are working hard to meet the increased demands of homeland security and a rapidly growing population. They need more resources, not less. I cosponsored an amendment to the FY05 budget resolution to restore full funding to the COPS, Byrne Grant, and Local Law Enforcement Block Grant programs at the FY04 funding levels. While the amendment was defeated, I'll keep fighting to restore these programs through the appropriations process.

Fighting for Homeland Security Funding

The terrorist attacks of 9-11 changed our world, and nobody knows that better than our law enforcement officers. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security has placed new responsibilities on Nevada law enforcement agencies.

Resources are spread thin, yet there are new communication, manpower, and equipment demands. I am working with each Nevada agency to ensure their highest priority needs are met. Last year, I secured more than \$80 million in grants and other funding for Nevada's law enforcement and homeland security efforts. Most of these funds go to state and local law enforcement officers, fire fighters, and other emergency responders.

I also helped establish the National Center for Combating Terrorism at the Nevada Test Site to better train America's counter-terrorism personnel and first responders. Since then I have secured more than \$100 million for the Center to train nearly 10,000 first responders from around the nation.

Law enforcement Weapons-Carry Bill

I worked for the last two years to pass the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act, which will exempt qualified current and former law enforcement officers from state laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed handguns across state lines. This law will ensure that officers who undergo the rigorous training to carry concealed weapons will have their experience recognized in every state. It will make our communities safer by allowing law enforcement officers to effectively fight crime wherever they go, and it will protect officers from criminals who carry a grudge. I also have introduced a bill (S. 2060) that would allow law enforcement officers to carry weapons on airplanes. This is another step in the war against terror.

Illegal Drugs and Methamphetamine

The Administration has also shifted the focus of our efforts in the war on drugs by directing our resources toward major international traffickers. But we can't ignore the dangers closer to home.

I know many Nevada communities are reporting a drastic increase in the use and production of methamphetamine and other illegal drugs. Methamphetamine robs people of their health and ability to be productive members of society, it causes increased criminal activity, and it increases the threat of explosions and fires. Because methamphetamine is produced in home labs and the ingredients are easily found in pharmacies and hardware stores, we have to remove this poison at the source.

I have supported the creation of task forces throughout our state to seek out and halt the manufacture of methamphetamine. I helped secure \$250,000 to assist Nye County local law enforcement agencies to curb the drug's production and distribution, and I am committed to helping drug task forces throughout the state receive the funding they need.

Protecting Our Children

I have always supported strong measures to stop child abduction. In 1999 I coauthored the Mikey Kale Passport Notification Act which prevents international abductions by requiring both parents to give written permission before passports can be issued to minors. Last year I backed legislation creating the national AMBER alert system and increasing penalties for kidnapping and child abuse. In addition, I secured a \$200,000 grant for Nevada Child Seekers, a non-profit group that helps find missing, abducted, or runaway children.

About 80 percent of the children kidnapped in the United States are taken by a family member - usually an estranged parent who isn't supposed to have custody. I am a cosponsor of two bills to prevent these cases: the Family Abduction Prevention Act and the Bringing Our Children Home Act. These bills protect children and strengthen families by cracking down on abductions by relatives and giving law enforcement officers more resources to handle those cases.

For more information visit my Web-Site at <http://reid.senate.gov>